



## Federman is Something Special at DATCP

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MADISON – The red and yellow Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ trademark is one of the most recognizable symbols from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Almost as recognizable should be the Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ Program Director Lois Federman.

“Lois has driven the Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ program to new heights with her vision and connections in the industry,” said Mike Powers, Administrator for DATCP’s Agricultural Development Division. “The trademark guarantees at least 50% of a product’s ingredients, production or processing activities are from Wisconsin. Lois is working to make sure everyone across the state recognizes Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ when they see it.”

Federman has directed the Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ program for almost seven years. In her previous position, Federman traveled the world as an employee of Land’s End, working in product development, quality control and labeling.

“In 1999, my family and I began to direct market meat from our farm, Marr’s Valley View Farm. Mineral Point. While at a Midwest Value Added Conference, I met some DATCP employees who asked me to assist with workshops and share my experience with other farmers,” explained Federman. “Soon, the position for the Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ Program Director was open, and it was a natural fit for me.”

When Federman started, the program had a solid foundation with an Alice in Dairyland promotion each year, a directory of companies and sampling events, but there wasn’t a lot of new activity driving new membership. Federman used her personal vision and mindset to move Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ to the next level.

“My family farm became a Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ member in 2000 so I had a personal commitment to better the program from the beginning,” added Federman. “I wanted the trademark to differentiate my product from someone down the road doing the same thing.”

A product doesn’t have to come from the farm to be Something Special *from* Wisconsin™. Items include specialty foods, personal care and home décor items, wood products and more. Customers are looking for local products. Customer demand is driving institutions, like schools and hospitals, to look for Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ products.

As the Program Director, Federman assists producers interested in marketing their products. While she cannot help each person one-on-one, she identifies common needs and works to provide those services to a large group in an effort to maximize the impact.

“The highlight of my position is when I can build new program opportunities that work for members,” said Federman. “My goal is to keep farmers in business through change and diversification. Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ program is one marketing tool that can help make that happen.”

Since coming on board, Federman has maximized the visibility of the red and yellow trademark by using the logo in different ways. Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ members can use the logo on their packaging, on point-of-sale cards or in advertising. The goal is to provide a potpourri of



Lois Federman is the Program Director of Something Special *from* Wisconsin™.

opportunities. Many members are surprised that pins, point of sale signage, social media marketing and their own listing on the program website and more are all included in membership fees.

“There are always new things happening in the Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ program to increase visibility and benefits of the membership,” said Federman. “The new Chevrolet Flex-Fuel Tahoe, driven all over the state by Alice in Dairyland and sponsored by the Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board, will now sport the trademark. The Wisconsin Bakers Association has become a member and will include the trademark on the packages for the famous Original Cream Puffs at the 2012 Wisconsin State Fair.”

With Federman’s ability to work with people, network and develop relationships, partnerships have made all the difference in adding to the credibility of Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ program. Federman’s efforts have been key in partnering DATCP with the Wisconsin Grocers Association, Wisconsin Restaurant Association, Thrive and the University of Wisconsin-Extension.

What sets this marketing program apart is that it is member-funded. Because of aggressive recruitment by Federman in the past several years, there are now over 400 Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ members whose membership fees are reinvested into the program for future promotions, such as placement on the *Discover Wisconsin* television show and website and *Wisconsin Public Radio*.

In 2011, Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ co-coordinated the *Local Food Means Business* tradeshow and workshops with Dane County’s Institutional Food Market Coalition. For the first time this year, there was a Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ Pavilion at the Wisconsin Restaurant Expo in Milwaukee.

“I am working to make sure consumers know there are high-quality Wisconsin products at your local restaurant, convenience mart and grocery store. Through the *Grocers Buy Local Wholesale Catalog*, distributors, stores and restaurants can easily identify Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ to products to offer,” concluded Federman. “Look for Something Special *from* Wisconsin™. If you don’t see it, ask for it.”

To learn more about Something Special *from* Wisconsin™, visit <http://www.somethingspecialwi.com>. Find Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/WIssfww> or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/somethingspecialwisconsin>. Connect with DATCP on Twitter at [twitter.com/widatcp](https://twitter.com/widatcp) or Facebook at [facebook.com/widatcp](https://www.facebook.com/widatcp).

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